



## AUSMIN 2014 Joint Communiqué

12 August 2014

Minister for Foreign Affairs Julie Bishop, Minister for Defence Senator David Johnston, Secretary of State John Kerry and Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel met on 12 August in Sydney for the annual Australia-United States Ministerial Consultations (AUSMIN).

On the 29<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first AUSMIN, the talks reaffirmed the Alliance's important contribution to the peace, security, and prosperity of the Asia Pacific and Indian Ocean regions as well as its enduring value in addressing contemporary and evolving challenges in the regions and throughout the world. The Alliance is a cornerstone of our strong and dynamic bilateral relationship, which is based on shared values and close friendship.

### 1. The Australia-United States Alliance

Australia and the United States reaffirmed the strong state of bilateral defence and security cooperation under the Alliance, as demonstrated through a decade of operations together in Afghanistan and Iraq.

With the signature today of the legally-binding **Force Posture Agreement between Australia and the United States**, we reaffirmed our commitment to work towards full implementation of the Force Posture Initiatives in Australia. The agreement provides a robust policy and legal framework and financial principles for implementation of the force posture initiatives announced in 2011. It demonstrates the United States' strong commitment to the Asia Pacific and Indian Ocean regions and Australia's firm support for the US rebalance. The agreement also reaffirms our mutual intent to deepen our relationship and regional security through expanded cooperation together and with other countries in the region.

Australia and the United States welcomed the larger **US Marine Corps** presence under the third rotational deployment currently in Darwin and discussed the way forward for **enhanced aircraft cooperation**. They discussed the potential for additional bilateral **naval cooperation** and welcomed the significant, wide-ranging series of port visits planned for 2015. They also asked their respective officials to develop practical options to enhance naval training and exercises in Australia and the region.

Acknowledging the high-level of **interoperability** between Australian and US Special Forces, both sides supported fostering these links to address shared threats and enhance capacity within the region.

The two countries committed to continue to work together to counter the growing threat of ballistic missiles in the Asia Pacific region, including by establishing a bilateral working group to examine options for potential Australian contributions to **ballistic missile defence** in the region.

Australia and the United States reaffirmed their intention to continue **strategic planning** collaboration between their respective defence departments, to develop common approaches to regional security challenges, and to harness opportunities for greater defence cooperation across the Asia Pacific and Indian Ocean regions.

They highlighted the importance of the bilateral **Exercise Talisman Sabre** to continue to enhance Australia-US interoperability, practise our joint collective capabilities, and demonstrate mutual resolve in maintaining joint defence readiness under the Alliance. They emphasised the importance of civilian agency participation in the Exercise and the desire to strengthen our capacity to deliver humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and incorporate 'women, peace and security' objectives into our combined planning. They planned to hold the next round of the bilateral **Political-Military Talks** at the earliest opportunity.

Australia and the United States reaffirmed their commitment to practical **space** cooperation, encouraged by recent steps towards establishing combined operations. They welcomed the significant progress made toward establishing the C-Band space surveillance radar and the Space Surveillance Telescope in Australia. They reiterated support for regional and global efforts to strengthen the safety, security and sustainability of space, including finalising the International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities.

Australia and the United States welcomed continued high-level bilateral cooperation on **defence science and technology**. The rise of increasingly sophisticated and complex threat environments, combined with continued resource pressures, makes the development of affordable capabilities an imperative. This includes diverse areas such as cyber, electronic warfare, hypersonics, as well as integrated intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance technologies.

Australia and the United States reflected on **defence industry collaboration** between the two countries. Over the last decade, Australia has agreed to purchase important capabilities from the United States, including the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, EA-18G Growler, P-8A Poseidon maritime surveillance aircraft and E-7A Wedgetail early warning aircraft. These shared platforms and capabilities provide opportunities to maintain and enhance bilateral interoperability.

Both countries emphasised that international law, including the United Nations Charter and, where relevant, international humanitarian law, applies to state conduct in **cyberspace** and reaffirmed that Australia and the United States would act in accordance with their obligations.

Both countries welcomed the expansion of bilateral trade and investment, driven by the strong affinities between our economies. They noted the dynamism and diversity in the economic relationship, including the significant level of business engagement across a broad spectrum of economic activity. Both countries looked forward to celebrating the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the entry into force of the **Australia-United States Free Trade Agreement** on 1 January 2015. The Agreement has deepened economic integration and boosted both economies.

Australia and the United States reaffirmed the importance of their people-to-people ties. The two countries also noted this year as the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the **Australian-American Fulbright Commission**, which has supported the professional growth of close to 5,000 students and scholars, and enriched bilateral relations.

Both countries welcomed the growth in cooperation on innovation, energy, science, technology and health. Bilateral **innovation cooperation** will strengthen our work on cutting edge issues, ranging from neuroscience to clean energy and energy efficiency, to research on global ocean acidification, to information technology and bio-preparedness.

## **2. Asia Pacific and Indian Ocean regions**

Australia and the United States reaffirmed their commitment to comprehensive engagement in the rapidly developing **Asia Pacific and Indian Ocean regions**. Australia expressed support for the United States' role in underpinning the regions' security, stability and prosperity. The United States welcomed the important contribution that Australia's wide-ranging engagement in those regions continues to make to security and stability.

They recognised **regional economic integration** and development as essential to the future prosperity of Australia and the United States, and of the Asia Pacific and Indian Ocean regions as a whole. They supported economic initiatives that foster growth and market openness, and deepen economic integration in those regions and globally.

Australia and the United States reaffirmed their strong commitment to concluding an ambitious, high quality, comprehensive **Trans-Pacific Partnership** agreement (TPP) as soon as possible. This will deepen regional integration, open new trade and investment opportunities, create jobs, and support economic growth.

They pledged to work closely in support of the **Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation's** (APEC) agenda to advance economic integration across the Asia Pacific region, especially in the areas of trade and investment liberalisation, structural reform and regulatory coherence, enhancing global value chains, improving supply-chain performance, combating corruption, promoting cross-border education cooperation, and women's economic empowerment.

Australia and the United States shared their views that the **East Asia Summit** (EAS) is the premier regional forum for dialogue and cooperation on the political, security, strategic and relevant economic challenges confronting the Asia Pacific and Indian Ocean regions. They will work more closely together, and with EAS partners, in continuing to enhance the EAS' role, through deepening its agenda on maritime security, non-proliferation and disaster response, and building synergies with other regional forums.

Australia and the United States welcomed the practical cooperation fostered under the **ASEAN Regional Forum** (ARF) and the **ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus** (ADMM+) and expect to cooperate closely to ensure an open dialogue on key regional security issues. They intend to build confidence through maritime security and maritime domain awareness, non-proliferation and disarmament, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, counter-terrorism, space and cyber security. Both countries strongly supported the ARF's work on preventive diplomacy and also noted their partnership in encouraging the ARF and ADMM+ to develop a regional strategic multi-year exercise plan to coordinate and improve the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief activities. They reaffirmed their support for the **Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum** (EAMF) as an important avenue for regional discussion of maritime issues. They are working closely together in taking forward a workshop on maritime environmental pollution in October 2014 under the US-led Expanded ASEAN Seafarer Training (EAST) initiative.

The two countries underscored their shared interest in the maintenance of peace and stability, respect for international law, unimpeded lawful commerce, and upholding freedom of navigation and overflight in the **East China and the South China Seas**. They called on claimants to refrain from actions that could increase tensions and to clarify and pursue claims in accordance with international law, including as reflected in the Law of the Sea Convention. They reaffirmed support for the rights of claimants to seek peaceful resolution of disputes, including through legal mechanisms such as arbitration under the Law of the Sea Convention. They opposed unilateral attempts to change facts on the ground or water through the threat or use of force or coercion.

The two countries emphasised the need for **South China Sea** claimant states to build upon the framework for managing disputes set forth in the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, including the commitment of ASEAN states and China to “undertake to exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities that would complicate or escalate disputes and affect peace and stability.” They encouraged claimant states to reach consensus on what types of activities should be permissible and what types of activities should be avoided in areas that are in dispute. They underscored that such a voluntary arrangement would serve as a good faith gesture among all parties and could help facilitate the early completion of a meaningful Code of Conduct in the South China Sea. The United States and Australia affirmed their support for a voluntary ‘freeze’ by claimants on activities in disputed maritime areas.

Australia and the United States acknowledged the significance of **Indonesia’s** third direct presidential election. They recognised the significant contributions of outgoing President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono in leading his country, and welcomed Indonesia’s leadership role in the Asia Pacific and Indian Ocean regions. Both countries look forward to working closely with Indonesian President-elect Joko Widodo and his administration after his inauguration in October. They affirmed their desire to seek opportunities to enhance joint cooperation with Indonesia on defence as well as humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

Affirming the longstanding and enduring friendship among Australia, the United States and the people of **Thailand**, both countries recognised that Thailand faced complex challenges that only the Thai people could address. They noted that Australia and the United States had expressed concern about the military coup. They looked forward to a transition to civilian rule and a return to democracy, stressing the importance of inclusive processes which reflect the will of the Thai people. They also stressed the importance of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Australia and the United States welcomed **Burma’s** commitment to political, economic and social reforms and encouraged further efforts towards constitutional reform, free and fair elections in 2015, and protecting the rights of all people in Burma. They also welcomed ongoing efforts to reach a nationwide ceasefire with ethnic armed groups and encouraged an inclusive political dialogue with stakeholders to achieve a lasting peace. They acknowledged steps that Burma has taken regarding non-proliferation, including its signature of the Additional Protocol with the IAEA in September 2013, and agreed on the importance of Burma severing all proscribed activities with the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, in accordance with relevant UN Security Council resolutions. They supported Burma’s deepening engagement with the international community and acknowledged its chairmanship of ASEAN and the East Asia Summit in 2014.

Australia and the United States welcomed **Japan's** efforts to make a greater contribution to international peace and stability, including through its decision to allow for the exercise of its UN Charter right to collective self-defence. They undertook to maintain strong bilateral security relationships with Japan and committed to enhance trilateral security and defence cooperation, including through the Trilateral Strategic Dialogue and further developing existing trilateral exercises.

The two countries committed to intensify their collaboration with the **Republic of Korea** to promote stability on the Korean Peninsula, in the wider region and globally, through expanded trilateral security and defence cooperation and by working together in bodies such as the UN Security Council, including on peacekeeping, counter-proliferation, maritime cooperation and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

Australia and the United States reaffirmed their commitment to building positive and constructive relations with **China**, including by pursuing dialogue on strategic security issues and by expanding practical cooperation in support of their common interest in maintaining regional peace and stability, and respect for international law. They will endeavour to strengthen their comprehensive and cooperative relations with China, including through stronger economic engagement, and to encourage China to make further progress in respect for human rights. They welcomed China's contributions to United Nations peacekeeping operations and international efforts to combat piracy in the Gulf of Aden, as well as its participation in the 2014 Rim of the Pacific Exercise (RIMPAC). They looked forward to joining China for the inaugural iteration of Exercise Kowari, a trilateral defence exercise to be conducted in Australia in October.

Australia and the United States underscored their serious concern that **Democratic People's Republic of Korea's** (DPRK) behaviour undermined the stability of the entire region and called on the DPRK to cease its threats and provocations, comply with its international commitments and obligations, including by abandoning its nuclear, missile and proliferation activities. They expressed their deep concern for the welfare of the North Korean people and the abducted citizens of other countries, called on the DPRK to implement the UN Commission of Inquiry's recommendations for ending the ongoing systematic, widespread, and extreme violations of human rights, and reiterated that those responsible must be held to account.

Both countries welcomed their close cooperation with affected countries in the region and beyond during the initial surface search for missing Malaysia Airlines flight **MH370**. This joint effort was a powerful example of regional cooperation. Australia, Malaysia and China continue the search, with an intensive underwater search of 60,000 km<sup>2</sup> due to start in early September after a bathymetric survey.

Australia and the United States recognised **India's** position as the world's largest democracy and an important economic and strategic power in the Asia Pacific and Indian Ocean regions. They intend to work with India to expand trilateral cooperation, including on shared challenges such as maritime security, energy security, and ensuring economic growth, and through collaboration in regional institutions.

They recognised the important role that the **Indian Ocean Rim Association** (IORA) played as the only ministerial-level grouping that spans the Indian Ocean region. They intend to continue to support IORA's work to facilitate closer cooperation in the Indian Ocean region. As IORA Chair, Australia reaffirmed its intention to develop a stronger policy agenda for IORA and welcomed the United States' participation as a Dialogue Partner at the Council of Ministers Meeting to be held in Perth on 9 October.

The two countries expect to further enhance **maritime security cooperation**, including combating **piracy** and promoting regional security, stability and freedom of navigation, by working closely together under the US-led Combined Maritime Forces in the Indian Ocean and through the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against ships in Asia (ReCAAP), which the United States will join in September.

Australia and the United States encouraged **Fiji's** progress toward holding elections on 17 September. They will continue to work together with other international partners to support elections and democratic reforms in Fiji.

They reaffirmed their commitment to assist the **Pacific Island countries** in realising their goal of a stable, secure and prosperous region. They welcomed the adoption of a new Framework for Pacific Regionalism by Pacific Islands Forum Leaders at their July meeting. Both countries welcomed the election of Dame Meg Taylor of Papua New Guinea as the first female Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat.

They undertook to continue to work together in pursuit of the sustainable management of **oceans and fisheries**, which are among the key development challenges in the Pacific and globally. They reaffirmed their commitment to cooperative efforts to address illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

Australia and the United States will endeavour to continue to provide **development assistance** that fosters economic growth and prosperity in the Asia Pacific and Indian Ocean regions. They intend to continue supporting development programs that reduce poverty by promoting innovation, gender equality, education and health, and collaborate on the provision of humanitarian assistance.

Australia and the United States reaffirmed their shared commitment to advance **gender equality** and the status of **women and girls**. In particular, they recognised that women's economic empowerment is a significant driver of growth and development, and planned to work together to promote women's employment and economic opportunity, particularly in the Asia Pacific and Indian Ocean regions.

### 3. Global challenges

Australia and the United States plan to work together through the **G20** toward achieving their shared goals of promoting strong, sustainable, and balanced global economic growth and employment, and increasing the resilience of the global economy, including by strengthening infrastructure investment, enhancing trade and building cooperation on energy, including on energy efficiency. The United States shared Australia's ambition for G20 members to boost the collective GDP of members by more than two per cent above current projections over the next five years.

Recognising the challenges climate change poses to security, Australia and the United States intend to continue to work through the **UN Framework Convention on Climate Change** process to negotiate a new, ambitious climate agreement applicable to all countries by 2015 to take effect in 2020.

The United States welcomed Australia's engagement on the **Global Health Security Agenda**, which seeks to accelerate progress toward a world safe and secure from infectious disease threats and to promote global health security as an international security priority.

The United States welcomed Australia's strong contribution during its term on the **United Nations Security Council** (UNSC) and our shared efforts to reach constructive and practical solutions to international peace and security issues. Both countries are continuing to work closely to tackle serious challenges before the Council, including the ongoing conflict and humanitarian crisis in Syria, protection of civilians in conflict zones, effective implementation of sanctions, countering the international terrorist threat and regional weapons proliferation.

Australia and the United States reaffirmed their commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of **Ukraine**. **Russia's** purported annexation of Crimea has no basis in international law. Both countries condemned Russia's support for and enabling of the continued destabilisation of eastern Ukraine; destabilisation which led to the shooting down of a passenger airliner, Malaysia Airlines flight **MH17**, killing all 298 on board. Both countries affirmed their commitment to completing a full international investigation into the attack— an appalling tragedy and terrible act of senseless violence – including through implementation of UNSC Resolution 2166 on MH17.

Australia and the United States condemned in the strongest possible terms the actions of the **Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant** (ISIL) and other armed opposition groups in **Iraq**. They welcomed the nomination of Dr Haider al-Abadi as Prime Minister-designate, and encouraged him to form a new and inclusive Iraqi Government as soon as possible. They called on all Iraqi leaders to work closely together and adopt a unified approach to addressing the country's challenges. The two countries indicated their deep concern about recent developments in northern Iraq and their commitment to work together and with other partners to undertake humanitarian operations to relieve besieged communities and to combat the threat posed by ISIL.

The two countries discussed the worsening humanitarian, social and political crisis in **Syria** and reaffirmed the urgent need for a political solution to the conflict consistent with the Geneva Communiqué. They also called for all nations to cooperate in applying pressure to those responsible for the crisis, the Assad regime and violent radical extremists, and to provide humanitarian aid for the civilian population suffering from the conflict. They expressed their intention to continue to work through the UNSC to press the parties to the conflict, and particularly the Syrian regime, to adhere to the provisions of UNSC Resolution 2139 on the protection of civilians and humanitarian access and UNSC Resolution 2165 on humanitarian access.

They intend to continue to work closely together and with the international community to address the national security risks posed by **foreign fighters** in the conflicts in Syria and Iraq, and the impact of their return, particularly in Southeast Asia. They will work together also in developing a set of established best practices for addressing this threat at the national level, including through legislation, border security, immigration and consular policies.

Australia and the United States reaffirmed their intention to continue assisting the Government of **Afghanistan** as it assumes full responsibility for the security of Afghanistan post-2014 and works to increase stability and prosperity. They welcomed the commitment of the parties to form a government of national unity.

They acknowledged the importance of **Pakistan** to South Asian stability and welcomed Prime Minister Sharif's commitment to economic reform. They committed to continue to work with Pakistan to help it address ongoing security and development challenges, including its critical energy needs.

Australia and the United States called on **Iran** to continue engaging constructively with the P5+1 to negotiate a joint comprehensive plan of action to resolve international concerns about its nuclear program, and called on Iran to resolve all outstanding issues related to its nuclear program – particularly those concerning its possible military dimensions – and fully and urgently to implement Iran's Framework for Cooperation agreed with the International Atomic Energy Agency. They urged Iran to take tangible steps to improve the country's human rights situation and to cooperate fully with the UN Special Rapporteur.

Both countries reaffirmed their commitment to working with **Israel** and the **Palestinians**, the United Nations and international partners to support the resumption of direct negotiations towards a just and lasting two-state solution. They expressed the need for an unconditional, prolonged ceasefire that significantly de-escalates the violence and leads to a permanent cessation of hostilities. Both countries are providing urgently needed humanitarian assistance to Gaza in addition to carrying through with existing commitments for development assistance to the Palestinian Territories.

The two countries called on **Egypt** to demonstrate its commitment to inclusive democracy, economic reform, human rights and fundamental freedoms in the interests of long-term stability. They expressed their deep disappointment about the recent decision by an Egyptian court to impose lengthy jail sentences on journalists, including Australian reporter Peter Greste. They pledged to continue representations at senior levels of the Egyptian Government to underline their concerns about the restrictions on freedom of expression in Egypt, including the targeting of journalists simply for doing their jobs. They called for the resolution of these cases as soon as possible.

Australia and the United States continued to support **counter-terrorism** cooperation and capacity building in South Asia, Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Eastern Africa, and through the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum. Australia and the United States reaffirmed **intelligence cooperation and sharing** as core elements of the Alliance that make a vital contribution to managing threats.

They reaffirmed their shared commitment to continue to work closely and cooperatively to help prevent the proliferation of **weapons of mass destruction** and their means of delivery. The use of chemical weapons in Syria served as a stark reminder of the gravity of this threat and the two sides reiterated their condemnation of Syria's actions. They noted the contributions of the annual Australia-US Counterproliferation Dialogue in coordinating responses to proliferation threats in the Southeast Asia region and elsewhere, and committed to continue to put priority on this cooperation in the future.

The two countries encouraged the earliest entry into force and effective implementation of the **Arms Trade Treaty** (ATT), while recognising that the international trade in arms is a legitimate commercial activity. The ATT provides an important means of preventing and eradicating illicit trade in small arms.

#### **4. AUSMIN 2015**

The United States offered to host the next AUSMIN meeting in 2015.